

## **PCB FACTS:**

**Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)** are any of over 130 different synthetic organic chemical mixtures that have similar basic chemical structures and physical properties. PCBs can have physical characteristics that range from oily liquids to waxy solids to hard resins. They are non-flammable, chemically stable, have high boiling points, and low electrical conductance. Because of these properties, PCBs were used in thousands of different industrial and commercial applications including electrical transformers and capacitors, electromagnetic switches, voltage regulators, circuit breakers, reclosers, and oil-encased cables; heat transfer and hydraulic equipment and fluids; as plasticizers in paints, plastics and rubber products; in pigments, dyes and carbonless copy paper; in industrial equipment including presses, lathes, milling machines, pipe threaders, etc. and many other applications.

**Toxicity and Regulation** - Through animal studies, it has been shown that PCBs may cause liver disorders, effect the reproductive systems, and may cause cancer. Additionally, under elevated temperatures PCB's can decompose into dioxin like compounds that are much more toxic. About 1.5 billion pounds of PCBs were manufactured in the United States between 1930 and 1975, however concern over their toxicity and persistence in the environment led Congress in 1976 to enact §6(e) of the "Toxic Substances Control Act" (TSCA). PCBs are now regulated by 40 CFR part 761, of the TSCA. The TSCA included among other things, prohibitions on the manufacture, processing, and distribution in commerce of PCBs. A total ban on the manufacture of PCBs went into effect in the U.S. in 1979. The TSCA legislated true "cradle to grave" (i.e., from manufacture to disposal) management of all PCBs in the United States.

**PCB Management on Wright Patterson AFB**- The Office of Environmental Management at Wright Patterson Air Force Base has been proactive in the implementation of cradle to grave management of PCBs on the installation. All known PCBs have been removed or encapsulated from the environment on the installation and as other sources of PCBs are discovered, these too are managed in accordance with all current laws and regulations.

**Disposal or Removal of PCB Containing Equipment** - Prior to removing or draining any equipment containing oil, hydraulic or cooling fluid; disposing of any electrical equipment; or prior to the removal of any fluorescent light ballasts, you must contact Wright Patterson AFB Office of Environmental Management's PCB program manager at 257-7152 to ensure that your site, facility or operation is in compliance with all laws and regulations regarding the packaging, labeling, dating, handling, disposing, and transporting of all types of PCB containing materials or equipment as set forth in 40 CFR 761 of the TSCA. The PCB Program Manager will assist you in ensuring compliance.

Never mix any potential PCB containing fluids with any non-PCB fluids. If you are unsure if your oils, fluids, or electrical devices contain PCBs, please contact the Wright Patterson PCB Program Manager at 257-7152 for assistance prior to draining, mixing, removing, storing, or handling these materials. All potential PCB containing electrical equipment, components, and light ballasts will be tested or evaluated to determine their PCB content, if any, and disposed of in accordance with all current TSCA requirements. See Wright Patterson Policy 02083C Nov. 00 for further information on management of PCB Light Ballasts.

Oils and fluids will be tested for PCB content and managed accordingly. Oils or fluids found to contain PCB's are managed separately from oils and liquids that do not. Non-PCB containing Oils, Hydraulic Fluids, or Liquid Petroleum Products may qualify for the "Used Oil Recycling Program" at WPAFB. See the "USED OIL & WASTE LIQUID PETROLEUM PRODUCTS (WLPP) MANAGEMENT" at the following Web site [http://www.abwem.wpafb.af.mil/EM/hazmat/index.cfm?fuseaction=main&obj\\_id=82](http://www.abwem.wpafb.af.mil/EM/hazmat/index.cfm?fuseaction=main&obj_id=82) for information on managing Non-PCB Used Oil or Liquid Petroleum Products.

